

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5406

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E.O. 11652: N/A - DECON UPON RECEIPT

TAGS: CASC

SUBJECT: STRAUSS EXPEDITION

FOR AF/E COOTE FROM AMB MANHARD

REF: PRETORIA 2765

1. PLEASE PASS FOLLOWING INFORMATION AND SUGGESTIONS TO STRAUSS:

A) YESTERDAY I PRESENTED BEAUTIFUL FAULKNER BOOK AS WELL AS COPY OF STRAUSS OUTLINE OF MARINE STUDY PROJECT DIRECTLY TO PRIME MINISTER. AS I EXPECTED, A PICTURE WAS WORTH 10, 000 WORDS. PRIME MINISTER WAXED ENTHUSIASTIC, IMMEDIATELY GAVE HIS FULL APPROVAL TO PROJECT AND INSTRUCTED HIS PERMANENT SECRETARY BURRENCHABAY TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS COORDINATE SUPPORT BY GOM MINISTRIES CONCERNED. STRAUSS MAY REST ASSURED THAT NO FURTHER WRITTEN APPROVAL WILL BE NECESSARY FROM GOM, BUT STRAUSS SHOULD CONTINUE TO COORDINATE PLANNING WITH GOM THROUGH EMBASSY.

B) I ALSO ASKED PRIME MINISTER ABOUT AVAILABILITY AT REASONABLE CHARTER RATE OF GOM FISHERIES MINISTRY VESSEL INVESTIGATOR. PRIME MINISTER SAID HE THOUGHT INVESTIGATOR COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE AT REASONABLE RATE FOR UP TO THIRTY DAYS AT TIME DESIRED IF MINOR DAMAGE TO VESSEL HAD BEEN REPAIRED IN MEANTIME AND IF GOM COULD BE PROVIDED WITH EXACT SPECIFICATIONS REQUIRED BY STRAUSS.

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C) RE GOM FACILITATIVE SERVICES FOR SCIENTIFIC EQUIPMENT

AND SUPPLIES REQUIRED FOR EXPEDITION, RAMGOOLAM AND BURRENCHOBAY ASSURED ME THEY FORESAW NO DIFFICULTIES PROVIDED GOM HAS SPECIFIC INFORMATION WITH ADEQUATE ADVANCE NOTICE.

D) I CAREFULLY AVOIDED MENTIONING STRAUSS OPTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR LINDBLAD YACHT DWYN WEN BASED IN SEYCHELLES BECAUSE OF RECENT INDICATIONS OF FRIENDLY BUT NONETHELESS REAL RIVALRY IN SEVERAL FIELDS BETWEEN MAURITIUS AND SEYCHELLES.

E) MY OPINIONS AND SUGGESTIONS ABOUT VESSEL TO BE CHARTERED ARE AS FOLLOWS.

1) WHILE DESIGN OF INVESTIGATOR IS PROBABLY MOST SUITABLE FOR STRAUSS PURPOSES, IT IS BEING USED FOR CARGO AND FUEL RUNS TO RODRIGUES AND ELSEWHERE, RECENTLY SUFFERED MINOR DAMAGE DURING STORM AT SEA AND IS NOW UNDER REPAIR IN PORT LOUIS HARBOR. DESPITE NEWLY GENERATED INTEREST AND SUPPORT OF PRIME MINISTER FOR PROJECT, SOMETHING COULD POSSIBLY HAPPEN BETWEEN NOW AND NEXT MARCH THAT WOULD MAKE THE INVESTIGATOR UNAVAILABLE AFTER ALL.

2) FOR REASONS OF TACT IF NOTHING ELSE STRAUSS SHOULD MAKE ONE MORE ATTEMPT TO PIN DOWN INVESTIGATOR BY WRITING TO BURRENCHOBAY WITH FULL INFORMATION AS TO EXPEDITION'S SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS, BUT IF POSSIBLE MAINTAIN FIRM OPTION ON DWYN WEN IN MEANTIME UNTIL FIRM DECISION CAN BE MADE, HOPEFULLY WITHIN ONE MORE MONTH.

3) IN ANY EVENT REGARDLESS OF WHICH VESSEL IS CHARTERED STRAUSS, ACCOMPANIED BY ONE OR TWO OF HIS GROUP, SHOULD CERTAINLY TRY TO VISIT MAURITIUS BRIEFLY PRIOR TO BEGINNING OF EXPEDITION TO MAKE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH RIGHT PEOPLE HERE. RAMGOOLAM IS MOST RESPONSIVE TO THIS KIND OF PERSONAL DIPLOMACY.

2. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO INVITE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY TO VISIT MAURITIUS TO PREPARE FEATURE PICTURE STORY UPDATING LAST NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ARTICLE OF 1955, POSSIBLY TO INCLUDE SOME COVERAGE OF STRAUSS EXPEDITION AT SAME TIME, IF THAT WOULD NOT IMPINGE ON STRAUSS OPERATIONS. PLEASE CONSULT STRAUSS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FIRST AND ADVISE.
MANHARD

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